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Revised by Headline for Headlines

WEST GERMAN ARMS DEBATE

I. Bitterly contested arms debate in West German Bundestag is indirect rebuff to Adenauer, but does not indicate his power over public opinion and Bundestag slipping.

A. Adenauer's general popularity remains almost at peak and bill is expected to pass comfortably.

B. Coalition opposition to poorly-drafted temporary bill only reflects deep concern that "Prussian-type" militarism be avoided.

C. Bad coordination between ministries and parliament also responsible for [illegible] debate.

[illegible]

A. Bill authorizes call-up of 6000 volunteers for army nucleus.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
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B. Bundestag passed bill on [illegible]st reading, but demanded changes in text to sharpen definition civilian control over Army.

C. Because Bundestag adjourns 15 July, little time left both for changes and for Bundestag and subsequent Bundesrat final approval (three readings required in Bundestag).

III. Attitude of Bundestag towards this temporary bill suggests trouble ahead for permanent arms legislation.

A. Permanent legislation involves some 20 bills, to be introduced during next six months.

B. Present action suggests that both

[illegible] rearmament aspects would be covered by constitutional amendments.

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1. On strictly legal basis, rearmament per se probably requires no constitutional changes.

2. One change in constitution will be necessary if West Germany takes over all sovereign powers granted it under Paris Accords, but this not connected with rearmament.

3. Adenauer probably no longer has two-thirds constitutional majority in Bundestag due to the increasing unreliability of the coalition Refugee Party.

D. Further coalition difficulties can be expected over rearmament legislation should Adenauer be forced to renege on promises for amendments.

IV. Progress on permanent arms bills will be slow and large-scale call-up of volunteers not likely until next spring.

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A. Attitude displayed by Bundestag during the debate suggests, in particular, that many deputies may want to procrastinate on any conscription bill until after next federal elections (mid-1957).

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